

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Original) An apparatus for the treatment of fabric which comprises :

transport means for effecting relative movement between a heat and pressure application means and the fabric, whereby the passage of the fabric through the apparatus results in the yarns substantially across the width of the fabric being forced closer together, thus imparting semi-permanent “ease” or “stretch” into the fabric,

characterised in that fabric speed control means are employed downstream of the apparatus whereby to maintain the fabric output speed at a predetermined level.

2. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the downstream fabric speed control means comprises nip rollers.

3. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the nip rollers are adapted to be driven at a constant speed.

4. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~, further comprising an upstream fabric speed control means employed on the input side of the apparatus upstream of the transport means to maintain the fabric input speed at a predetermined level.

5. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, where the upstream fabric speed control means comprises nip rollers.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 4 ~~either of claims 4 or 5~~, further comprising speed difference control means for controlling the speed difference between the upstream and downstream fabric speed control means.

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~, further comprising additional control means for detecting undershrinkage.

8. (Original) A method of treatment of fabric comprising the steps of:

providing a heat and pressure application means;

providing a transport means for effecting relative movement between the heat and pressure application means and the fabric;

providing the fabric to the transport means and thereby past the heat and pressure application means, resulting in the yarns substantially across the width of the fabric being forced closer together, thus imparting semi-permanent "ease" or "stretch" into the fabric; and

passing the fabric through downstream fabric speed control means to maintain the fabric output speed at a predetermined level.

9. (Original) A method of treatment of fabric as claimed in claim 8, further comprising the step of passing the fabric through upstream fabric speed control means to maintain ~~the fabric input speed~~ at a predetermined level prior to providing the fabric to the transport means.